

City of San José, California

CITY COUNCIL POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 6-5
TITLE: STREET NAMING AND RENAMING
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 13, 1971
REVISED DATE: May 10, 2005

BACKGROUND

The City Council of the City of San Jose is responsible for the naming of public streets, boulevards, avenues, drives, courts, circles, pedestrian and other public and private rights-of-way. Street renaming is often a serious and complicated matter. It should be a process that is inclusive of the community. The purpose of the policy is to set forward appropriate criteria and a process by which streets are renamed in the City of San José. The policy places a heavy burden and strict criteria on street name change proponents due to the disruption a name change can cause existing businesses, the post office and the initial, temporary confusion that can be caused and potential removal of significant names of historical meaning.

PURPOSE

The City Council desires to establish uniform guidelines to govern the naming of streets and the changing of street names in order to avoid potential conflicting names or misunderstandings and to promote the public welfare and general convenience of the community.

POLICY

New Streets and Other Named Rights of Way

It is the policy of the City of San Jose that the names for new public and private streets and other named rights of way:

- A. Are to be selected by the developer and submitted to the Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for clearance and approval before the tract map is recorded.
- B. Must meet with the approval of the County Communications Department and the U.S. Post Office.
- C. That continuing for some length in one general alignment shall have only one name.
- D. Will usually be called "court" when they are cul-de-sacs; however, "place" is acceptable. A cul-de-sac may carry the same name as the street at its open-end.
- E. That are loop streets will usually be called "circle".
- F. The maintenance and future use of names with historic significance within Santa Clara Valley is encouraged.

Renaming of Other Named Rights of Way

It is the policy of the City of San Jose that the renaming of public and private streets and other named rights of way shall follow the criteria and process set forth below:

1. Renaming of public or private streets or other named rights of way shall fully implement the Council Policy on Public Outreach, specifically including early consultation with the affected community, multi-lingual notices in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese (and including any other language that is reasonably known to be prominent in the area) and translation,
2. Prior to submitting an application to the Plan Implementation Division, the applicant is responsible for holding at least one public meeting noticed in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese (and including any other language that is reasonably known to be prominent in the area) to all affected property owners and/or occupants and businesses.
3. “Affected property owners” means property owners and/or occupants and businesses within 500 feet of the street whose name is proposed for change.
4. Submit a completed application to the Plan Implementation Division of the Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement, including:
 - The existing street name, the proposed new street name and the reasons for the requested street name decision must be submitted.
 - A location map showing the street or the portion of a street proposed for renaming
 - The required application, environmental and outreach fees
 - The applicant’s proof of legal residency or business address in the City of San José. This may be in the form of a utility bill with the applicant’s name and address listed.
 - A list of names and addresses of all affected property owners and occupants with their corresponding Assessor’s Parcel Number
 - A petition signed and dated by a majority (over fifty percent) of the affected property owners with their printed names and addresses next to their signatures and that:
 - a. indicates their support of the proposed street renaming, and
 - b. the signatures are no more than two years old upon time of submittal to the City of San José, and
5. Each and every petitioner must be a resident of real property or business within 500 feet of the street whose name is proposed for change or initial naming.
6. The applicant will be responsible for providing a utility bill from each signatory as a method for verifying signatures collected.
7. Renaming of streets with names of Santa Clara Valley historic significance is discouraged.
8. Renaming of streets the contained in the City of San José’s Historic Resources Inventory or that may have potential historical significance, shall be referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission for review and recommendation.
9. The Planning staff shall hold at least one public meeting in accordance with the Council Policy on Public Outreach on the proposed renaming prior to the Planning Commission’s public hearing.
10. Staff shall prepare a report and recommendation to the Planning Commission (and any other appropriate commission) and a subsequent memo to the City Council addressing the Commission’s recommendation on a proposed street renaming application.